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Title: Contemplations...

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The instinctive definition is to claim that Justice is that which brings punishment onto a criminal, to take one who has harmed us or our laws, our society and see retribution brought upon them. This view on it, a visceral thing that comes from the hurt and dark parts of our psyche, is exactly that which the Virtue is designed to protect against. This is retribution, or revenge, not Justice.

The Virtue of Justice is the Principle of Truth, tempered by the Principle of Love. Justice, therefore, must be the judgement of a crime and a proper punishment given for it, but with it must come a conscience, ethicality, a heart of Compassion, which softens the hard hand of Truth and deals true Justice.

The Druidess Jaana teaches that in Justice, we must consider the total effect of both the crime and of what Justice we deal. We must consider not merely the crime, but the intent of the person who committed the crime.

I recall a circumstance I found myself in once, which may illuminate the matter;

I found myself travelling  
between Britain and Yew  
one year, when I came  
across an farmer, chasing  
a skinny lad towards me.

I turned my steed  
sideways, stopping them  
both, and greeted them  
with raised hand.

"Greetings! May I ask  
what transpires here?"

The farmer grabbed the  
youth by the collar and,  
seeing the symbols of  
Virtue about my armour,  
presented him to me with  
an expression of glee.

"Paladin! I caught this  
youth stealing my apples!  
I have no family, and I  
must spend hours  
collecting what I can  
from my farm and sell  
them to survive - I  
demand Justice!"

I looked intently at the  
farmer "You wish true  
Justice, sir? And will  
abide by my judgement in  
this?"

The farmer nodded grimly,  
and the boy seemed to  
pale, gripped solid still by  
the farmer as he was.

I considered the issue  
before me carefully,  
before delivering what I  
considered to be Justice.

"Boy - you have  
committed the crime of  
theft, and stolen food  
from this farmer." I  
looked at him grimly,  
noting his sunken and  
hungry features. "Your  
punishment is thus; you  
will work for the farmer  
for the next three  
seasons. He shall feed  
you and lodge you, but he

shall not pay you for  
your labour." The boy,  
fearfully, nodded. "And do  
not think of running, else  
I shall seek you out."

I looked at the apparently  
shocked and angry farmer,  
"You have asked for  
Justice, good farmer; you  
have one who will work  
for you, and together you  
will harvest a greater  
load of fruit."

The farmer realised then  
that he had received aid  
which would help him  
greatly, and the boy  
realised - in due time -  
that he would be fed and  
had a place to live."

When I came on the  
farm some years hence,  
the boy still worked for  
the farmer, who  
considered him a son.

They had received true  
Justice - Truth, tempered  
by Love.